

BIRDS OF THE SEA.

Familiar Nests Constructed by Marine Fishes.

The nests built by some fishes are almost as remarkable as those of birds. A writer in describing the nest of the semotilus says: "I was fishing my boat along in one of the little bays of the St. Lawrence River, near the Canadian shore, when I came to a pile of pebbles or stones, almost cone-shaped, that reached up from the bottom at least four feet, coming almost to the surface. Near by I found another of those heaps and in the course of the summer discovered several. Almost everyone who saw them thought they had been thrown over from some vessel, but one was located on a very narrow inlet, making this explanation impossible, and before long I discovered the origin of the mound. It was a veritable castle of stone, weighing in all, probably, nearly a ton, and was the nest of the fish known very properly as the stone-tor, or semotilus.

The fish was about a foot in length, and the nest was the result, doubtless, of several years' work. In almost every case the nest was off a sandy beach, but not in the immediate vicinity of stones of any kind, so each pebble which the fish brought in its mouth was taken from a long distance, suggestive of the labor represented by the complete nest. Several fish worked at one nest, and season after season it grew until it was, as seen, four or five feet from the bottom, really a menace to small boats. In the winter the top was frozen solidly, and in the spring, when the ice was broken up, the top was carried away, to be renewed by the fishes, that almost invariably dropped the stones or pebbles on the top, so that the tendency was to form a cone. On this stone fortress the eggs were deposited and drifted into the interstices of the heap, the young finding protection here from various predatory fishes until they were large enough to care for themselves.

One of the most singular nests made by the birds of the sea is that of the paradise fish—a beautiful long-finned creature common in the streams of India. I was fortunate in observing a pair of these fishes during the nest-building season, and saw the beginning and completion of the nest, which, so far as a fish's nest can be, was aesthetic. I was first attracted by seeing the fish repeatedly rush to the surface, as if to obtain air, and this was its object, as sinking it ejected a little silvery bubble beneath the water, which rose and remained at the surface, glistening with wonderful iridescence.

This operation was continued indefinitely, and finally I noticed that the bubbles were all collecting together, forming a brilliant-hued raft an inch or two in diameter. Other bubbles were released beneath these which soon made a raft of several layers, forming a conspicuous object upon the water, flat on top and more or less cone-shaped below.

This was the nest of the paradise fish, in which no foreign matter was introduced, the air bubbles, with their delicate envelope, alone constituting it. Among them the eggs were deposited, and here the young were hatched and held together until old enough to stray away, when the nest was deserted. The floating nest may be compared to that of some of the grebes that float on the surface fastened to some weeds and rises and goes down with the tide.

They Mixed the Babies.

Some time ago there was a dance in a Canadian settlement for the benefit of the settlers and their wives. Most of the married ladies had babies with them, whose noisy perversity required too much attention to allow the ladies the full swing of their souls' pleasure in the dance. So a number of young men present gallantly volunteered to watch over the refractory infants, so that their mothers could indulge without let or hindrance in the sweets of the "light fantastic" exercise.

The gallant offer was readily and confidently accepted, but no sooner had the women left their dear charges to the care of those mischievous young rascals than they commenced stripping the infants, changing the clothing, and giving one the apparel of another, till all were transmogrified.

The dance and music continued into the "wee sma' hours," and then it was time to go home. The lights were lowered, and each mother hurriedly took a baby, in the dress of her own, and started for home, which, in many instances, was ten or fifteen miles away.

The following morning there was a prodigious row in the settlement. Mothers discovered what had occurred, and then commenced some of the tallest female pedestals on record. Living as they did, miles apart, it required two full days to unmix the babies, and as many months to restore the mothers to their naturally sweet dispositions. Those young men never venture into that settlement now. It wouldn't be safe.

Horse-Power of the Ocean.

Mr. E. Gerlach, a merchant of Santa Monica, Cal., has patented a machine called a wave motor, by which he proposes to harness the ocean and apply the great power of its waves to practical purposes. The proposed apparatus is described by the San Francisco Chronicle as consisting principally of two paddles suspended in a framework that is projected into the ocean from the head of a pier. These transmit by cables the force given them by the wash of the waves to a fly-wheel placed equidistant from the paddles. This fly-wheel is continually in motion, its accumulated force carrying it round during the momentary lapse between the backward and forward motion of the waves, the wheel working always in the one direction, and from its shaft the power may be sent by the usual mechanical appliances to any place where it is needed.

Former attempts to obtain useful power from the movement of the ocean surface have been failures, and it is thought this was because it was sought by them to utilize the rise and fall of the waters. The idea in this case is to obtain power from the forward and backward motion of the water, which is practically continuous. The mechanical arrangements permit the flywheel to turn always in the same direction, and the cables are made so that they will give before the lateral force of the waves, a heavy sea not affecting them.

There still remains the fact that the amount of power obtainable varies with the force of the water movement, so that it hardly is advisable to use the generating wheels directly. Hence it is proposed to use the machine to pump seawater into the reservoirs from which hydraulic power could be obtained for manufacturing, generating electricity, or other purposes. It is estimated that the cost of constructing a 100-horse power motor would be about \$8,000, this including the necessary supporting framework at the head of the pier, but not the pier itself. From this statement the practical man may be able to form some idea as to the relative cost of power obtained from the waves, that furnished by steam being taken as the standard.

HER PAST.

Another One of Those Things One Would Rather Have Left Unsaid.

She had admired the men and though the years had come and gone and she was still Miss Brown her admiration had not abated, say the Detroit Free Press.

On the contrary it had increased. She was of the modern woman school also, or at least wanted people to think so, and as for herself, she thought, she was intensely interesting. To young Mr. Jones she had been lately addressing herself and young Mr. Jones didn't like it a little bit. In fact, young Mr. Jones usually fled when she appeared, but on this occasion she had taken him unawares and was now holding him in her thrall in a pretty alcove in the conservatory.

Just beyond them sat a pretty girl to whom young Mr. Jones was devoted and belonged to get over to her and out the rapid youth who, young Mr. Jones was sure, was making desperate love to her. But Miss Brown held on like a turtle.

"Do you know, Mr. Jones," she was saying in her most intense fashion, "that the modern woman is an ideal to me?"

"No, really, I don't know," confessed Mr. Jones, much against his will.

"But it is true," she continued; "and, oh, Mr. Jones, some of the women we read of in books, see on the stage and hear of in daily life appeal so strongly to me!"

"Yes?" said Mr. Jones, with a rising infection.

"Indeed, yes," she responded. Then with deep earnestness she turned to him:

"Did you know, Mr. Jones," she whispered, almost tragically, "that I am a woman with a past?"

Young Mr. Jones was absorbed in watching the pretty girl and the afore-said youth.

"Well," he replied in an absent-minded sort of way, "most women who had lived forty years weren't born yesterday, don't you know?"

Later in the evening young Mr. Jones told the pretty girl how it happened that Miss Brown would forever thereafter be to him only a stranger.

Over the River.

On a pleasant day last autumn a little tot of a boy was standing on the dock looking out over the water toward the Canadian shore. He was so quiet and sad-eyed that a good-natured policeman, who saw him there, came up to speak to him. Before he had a chance for that, however, the boy had spoken to him.

"Is that heaven over there, sir?" he asked, with a faint tremor in his voice.

"Well, I should say not, my little man," laughed the policeman. "That's Windsor."

"Well, that's the river, isn't it?" asked the boy with a stubborn kind of persistence which the policeman's laugh had not affected in the least.

"Yes, that's the river. There ain't any mistake about that."

"Then," said the boy, firmly, "that's heaven over there."

The policeman looked at him curiously.

"What makes you say that?" inquired the policeman, with a smile of encouragement.

"Because," and the boy's lip trembled and his eyes grew moist, "Mamma went to heaven last week and she told me she would meet her little boy there and yesterday when I asked papa where heaven was he told me it was over the river. Now, sir," and he was very earnest and serious, "they wouldn't tell me stories, would they?"

Then the big policeman sat down, and taking the boy on his knee they talked together a long time.—Free Press.

A Curious Hiding Place.

Many people have curious hiding places in which they keep their savings, but there could hardly be a more ingenious or curious "savings bank" than that which recently came to light in Bucks County. An old woman who lived alone in a little cottage at Hieglerville was known to have amassed considerable wealth, and it was also known that she had no faith in the established banks and saving funds. But where the old woman kept her money was a mystery, until she came to die a few days ago. Then a thorough search was made of the premises, without disclosing the hiding place. Finally, when the body was being prepared for burial, a porous plaster on the old woman's side was noticed, which did not lie as close to the skin as such plasters generally do. When the plaster was removed a number of government bonds representing the old woman's entire fortune, were found between it and the skin.—Philadelphia Record.

The Diversions of Bishops.

Fencing, as a rule, is not cultivated by ecclesiastics unless, perhaps, they happen to be military chaplains. There are at present, however, in France an archbishop and two bishops who are experts in the use of the foil. Mgr. Ardin, archbishop of Sens, has a bout with the skewers every morning in his palace. The bishop of Chalons (Mgr. Latty) is also a good fencer, but these two prelates are distanced by Bishop Batifolier of Mende, who is not only an agile escrimeur but rides and drives as well as some of the most finished sportsmen of the Jockey Club, thus showing that the cares and responsibilities of a diocese are not incompatible with the cultivation of worldly accomplishments.—Paris Letter to London Telegraph.

Be careful of the man who compliments you; he is probably puffing you up, with a view of cutting you open.

THE MEN OF MARS.

An Arizona Astronomer Thinks They May Be Nineteen Feet Tall.

Percival Lowell has completed a series of lectures in the Lowell Institute course which are full of food for thought and of inspiration for fancy, says the Boston Post. In these lectures he told his audiences what he had seen through his telescope on the planet Mars, and what opinions he had formed from what he saw. Mr. Lowell has had opportunities for making acquaintance with our neighboring planet equaled by few men on this earth. He has established, and maintains, at his own expense and for his personal use, an astronomical observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, at an elevation and in a section where the clearness of the atmosphere and other favorable conditions offered great advantages for observation. And there he has scrutinized Mars during the recent approach of that planet to the earth.

What Mr. Lowell has gained from these observations is a clear conviction that the planet Mars is inhabited. And not only this, but he reasons from what he has seen that the men of Mars are far advanced, at least in some respects, beyond the present development of the human race upon the earth. Without attempting to follow Mr. Lowell through the very interesting account of his observations and the deductions which he draws from them, his explanation of the phenomenon known as the "canals" may be mentioned as an example. These famous "canals," appearing and disappearing on the surface of the planet, have been the subject of hopeless speculation ever since the Italian astronomer, Schiaparelli, noticed them. It seemed impossible to regard them as the work of men, because of their magnitude and the rapidity with which they sprang into existence. No men, it was thought, could dig so fast. But as Mr. Lowell sees it, a solution of the puzzle is ready. The markings which we call canals, he holds, are not the trenches themselves, but the broad belts of vegetation which spring up, and again fade away, along the borders of the vast irrigating ditches which the men of Mars have built.

This is the basis of Mr. Lowell's message regarding Mars. The canals may have been built years ago; they certainly are not dug year by year as they seem to be; and it is the recurrence of vegetation, season after season, which brings the markings of these fertile belts within the vision of telescopes on the earth. Then the question comes, to what use are these canals put? They are seen to converge at spots which show a dark green color in the telescope at Flagstaff. These spots Mr. Lowell calls "oases;" and here fancy may picture, as analogy points out, the inhabitants of Mars congregating during the long winter of that planet to live in luxury upon the stores laid by during the season of vegetation.

What sort of men is it who have built this vast system of irrigation and transportation and have created oases of refuge in the midst of barrenness? By mathematics, Mr. Lowell shows that the men of Mars may be nineteen feet in height and of corresponding physical strength; the attraction of gravitation there being not more than one-third what it is upon the earth. And if, as we have the right to infer, their intellectual development matches that of their bodies, it is not difficult to conceive of the production of such works as those which Mr. Lowell's telescope disclosed when pointed toward the red planet in the clear air of Arizona.

It may be said that this is fanciful; that the observed facts do not sustain the deductions. But the facts at least do not contradict the belief which Mr. Lowell holds. The men of Mars may claim our confidence as existent beings until some one arises to show more plainly that they do not exist.

How to Have Good Books.

All of us want our literature to be clean, helpful and elevating, writes Edward W. Bok in the Ladies' Home Journal. But all of us evidently do not, just the same. If we did, we would have what we wanted and nothing else. Nasty books are printed simply because there are nasty people who want them. Suggestive papers are issued, and successfully so, because there are people who read them. Those of us who are fond of good books are indignant because such books as "Easter Waters," "The Heavenly Twins," "The Green Carnation," "The Yellow Aster" are successful. But why are they successful? Because we buy them, and when I say "we" I mean "we." I do not mean the other man or the other woman upon whose shoulders we are always ready to transfer the blame. I have very quietly made a study of the sources from which a great deal of this cry of bad or ephemeral literature comes, and I find that it comes, in quite respectable proportions, from the very people who buy these books and help them to success. Now, one thing is absolutely true: just so long as we continue buying these books, just so long will we have them. When we stop buying, depend upon it the authors will stop writing them and the publishers will stop issuing them. But if we buy "Heavenly Twins" why, there will be more "Heavenly Twins," and a year hence we will have "Infernal Triplets." This whole question is simply one of demand and supply; so long is the demand continues so will the supply.

New Alliments.

"Strange, ain't it, the new kinds of alliments folks has?" remarked Mr. Simr Smith, after reading his newspaper. "Now I've been a-reading an advertisement in here of a new medicine, and it says it's dreadful good for a sluggish liver."

"Liver trouble ain't no new disease," responded Mrs. Smith. "I remember grandfather having liver trouble when I wasn't more'n ten year old."

"I was a-saying that this medicine was good for sluggish liver, Martha Ann, and what beats me is how them slugs gets inside the liver, anyhow."

The hen is a cheerful bird. She will sit untroubled on a china egg for three successive weeks and then come out into the barnyard and solemnly inform the farmer he needs a hair cut.—Adams Freeman.

"Does your uncle remember you in making his will?" Charlie—"He must have, for there is no mention of my name in it."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

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What are Democratic principles? Were drawn out of the banks and hidden within a period of ninety days?

What does a single tax advocate propose? Who was President of the United States in 1860-1869?

If all tax was placed on land, what would be the tax on the farm? Who have been the occupants of the presidential chair since 1801?

What would be the tax on an suburban property, and how much on the acre worth two million dollars in the center of the city? Who have been members of the Cabinet during every presidential administration?

Why are the Republicans and favor high protective tariff? How many Democrats, Republicans, and members of other parties have we had in each and every Congress?

What do the Socialists want? How many lawyers in each Congress? What would be the conditions if Socialistic principles prevailed?

What do the Populists desire? What were the issues involved in the Missouri Compromise, the Monroe Doctrine, the Dred Scott Decision, Fugitive Slave Law, etc., etc.?

If government owned and operated the banks, and banks never failed, and people never hid their money and all money came out and into active circulation, and money was as abundant as interest-bearing law, and all enterprises started up and everybody had employment, what then?

What do the Nationalists want? What of the geographical record of the great leaders in our early history, including Washington, Patrick Henry, Hamilton, Webster, Franklin, Clay, Calhoun, Jefferson and others?

What has thrown so many people into idleness of late years? What was the history of the Coney movement?

Why nationalize the railroads, the coal mines and various industries? What did the coal miners' strike begin and what was the extent of that movement?

What do the right-hour advocates propose? What are the facts about the Pullman strike, the American Railway Union and the boycott of the Pullman cars?

How could money be benefited by voting? What are the remedies proposed whereby capital and labor may each have justice? See "Hill's Political History of the United States."

What started the financial panic of 1907? What are the facts about the Pullman strike, the American Railway Union and the boycott of the Pullman cars?

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